

Naming of Skeletal Muscles

1. Location

- muscle name would indicate the bone or body region it is associated with
i.e. intercostal muscle- runs between the ribs

2. Action of the Muscle

- descriptive words such as flexor, extensor, adductor, abductor can appear in the muscle name
- several criteria can be combined
i.e. Extensor Carpi Radialis Longus tells us the muscle's action (extension) the joint it acts on (Carpi-Wrist), that it lies close to the radius of the forearm (radialis) and hints at the size (Longus long)

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3. Direction of the Muscle Fibres

-naming of some muscles reveals the direction in which their fibres run to an imaginary line, usually the midline of the body
- in muscles with the terms Rectus (straight) fibres run parallel to that imaginary line, whereas Transverse and Oblique indicate the muscle fibres run at right angles and obliquely to that line
ie abdominal muscles

4. Shape

- muscles have distinct shapes
-deltoid muscle is roughly triangular



5. Number of Origins

- the terms biceps, triceps and quadriceps form part of the muscles' name
- you can assume the muscles have 2, 3 and 4 origins
ie biceps femoris

Origin -attachment of a muscle where the bone remains fixed during the contraction

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Insertion- movable part or attachment of a muscle as opposed to origin
i.e. Deltoid O=Scapula I=Humerus

6. Origin/Insertion

-according to their attachment points
Sterno/cleido/mastoid
Origin-Sternum and Clavicle Insertion: Mastoid Process

7. Relative Size of the Muscle

-terms such as maximus(largest), minimus(smallest), longus(long), brevis(short) are used in muscle names
i.e. Gluteus Maximus

Muscles Action: Insertion always moves towards the fixed Origin

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